

*Cost of Living*

and, secondly because management, also suffering under similar inflationary expectations, is not too unwilling to accommodate the unions in their demands. Thus, costs and consequently prices do increase, and these expectations are vindicated in a perpetual motion forever upward.

At some time, Mr. Speaker, someone has to come to grips with this scramble where everyone is trying to stay ahead or just to keep up with the ever-spiralling rate of inflation. Our party has proposed an economic stabilization program as an attempt to contain inflation and at the same time to not jeopardize economic growth. Such a proposal is met with jeers, derision and taunts from the government and its supporters who say it won't work and suggest it has not worked in the United States or Great Britain. On that last point I suggest that hon. members should look again at the experience of our sister nations. Although, certainly, perfection has not been achieved in those two countries, they have been able to control food costs in the last 12-month period better than we have done in Canada, as well as the over-all inflationary rate in the United States. We have not said that this is the cure-all or great panacea for Canada's economic ills. Such a program must be accompanied by sound fiscal policy and would incorporate policies relating to mortgages rates, food prices, old age pensions and labour-management bargaining. And most important of all, we must control government spending.

It is incredible that the government should have increased expenditures from some \$10½ billion for the year 1967-68 to an estimated \$19½ billion for the current fiscal year, an average increase of 7 per cent during the last seven years. The other day the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) commented that it was interesting to note that small "c" conservative governments had implemented price and wage controls in the United Kingdom and the United States. Naturally, I attach a different connotation to this from that of the hon. member for York South. I, as a Conservative, do not look forward with anticipation to a further intrusion by government into the private sector of the economy. Nor did Mr. Heath. Nor did President Nixon. But, Mr. Speaker, our nation's economy is in a desperate situation and we in this party alone have the courage and the conviction to do something about the situation here in Canada.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Standing Order 2(1) reads:

The House shall meet on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2.00 o'clock p.m. and on Fridays at 11 o'clock a.m. unless otherwise provided by standing or special order of this House.

Standing Order 42(1) reads:

Forty-eight hours' notice shall be given of a motion for leave to present a bill, resolution or address, for the appointment of any committee, or for placing a question on the order paper; but this rule shall not apply to bills after their introduction, or to private bills, or to the times of meeting or adjournment of the House.

● (0440)

Mr. Speaker, in view of the hour, and in particular in view of what these hours mean to the staff—not to the members, because there are not many members here—I wonder if it would not be possible, under the two Standing Orders I have just cited, to ask the House for an order,

[Mr. Higson.]

with unanimous consent, that the sitting of this House for Friday, September 14, commence at two o'clock.

I am not trying to cut off tonight's debate. I do not know any way to do that, or I would try. It seems to me, for the reasons I have given, that the House might be doing the decent thing not to sit until two o'clock this afternoon. Though Standing Order 2(1) requires you to take the chair at eleven o'clock on Friday mornings, it seems to me this could be set aside by special order of the House.

I suggest that under Standing Order 42(1) a motion having to do with the time of meeting of the House does not require 48 hours' notice. I would be prepared to write out a motion, but if there is unanimous consent perhaps there could be a House order.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Bell:** Mr. Speaker, we saw the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) fingering his Standing Orders, and wondered what he was about. To us this seems a very good idea. It seems to be in order, and we support it wholeheartedly. We feel very guilty as far as the staff is concerned, although we feel we are carrying out our duty as far as the debate is concerned. If there could be some agreement for a two o'clock sitting, it would certainly meet with our approval.

**Mr. Speaker:** I appreciate the point which has been made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and the point made by the hon. member who has just spoken, but the difficulty which the Chair faces at the moment is that there is not a quorum in the House. I wonder whether the Chair should feel authorized to accept an order which is offered at 4.45 in the morning without a quorum.

Perhaps earlier this evening some hon. members should have pointed to the fact that there was not a quorum and there should have been an adjournment then. That is my difficulty. Perhaps hon. members might comment on this point, that is, whether it is in order for a House that sits at 4.45 in the morning without a quorum to decide whether we ought to sit at eleven o'clock on Friday morning, according to Standing Orders.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be difficult, but it seems to me if there is not a quorum then the House should adjourn. However, I sense that even while you have been making this comment a few members have come in and there may now be 20 of us.

**An hon. Member:** Twenty-one.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Well, we have grown up. I believe the number now exceeds 20, which is a quorum. Perhaps in those circumstances—

**Mr. La Salle:** Because you have an independent.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Perhaps in the circumstances Your Honour would accept my proposal.